



# What's New in the City

## City of Natchitoches

### 89th Annual Christmas Festival December 5

December 1, 2015



The 89th Annual Natchitoches Christmas Festival will take place Saturday, December 5 in downtown Natchitoches. The Natchitoches Historic District Business Association and the City of Natchitoches will usher in the holiday season with live entertainment, the Festival of Lights Parade, food vendors, and fireworks.

Live musical entertainment begins at 11:00 a.m. with a performance by Brody Caster and a surprise SMG Nashville Artist. Brody Caster is an up and coming country and country blues music star hailing from Kansas whose love of music began at a very early age. His first CD, Small Town

World, was released in May 2015, and his rendition of "Queen of Memphis" hit number 15 on the European charts. Caster will perform, marching bands, dance lines and Santa Claus. The parade will travel along Jefferson Street to Front Street, turning left onto Lafayette Street and Second Street, and ending at University Parkway. Musical entertainment con-



form a musical showcase with a surprise guest from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the riverbank stage.

At 1:00 p.m., the Christmas Festival of Lights Parade will begin at the corner of Jefferson Street and University Parkway. The parade will feature floats of reigning Queens including Miss Merry Christmas and the Christmas Belles, local digni-

ties, marching bands, dance lines and Santa Claus. The parade will travel along Jefferson Street to Front Street, turning left onto Lafayette Street and Second Street, and ending at University Parkway. Musical entertainment continues at 3:00 p.m. with headline performers Chicken on the Bone, a high energy party rock band promising a dance party celebration of huge hits! Chicken on the Bone members are irresistible rock entertainers playing real rock and the best tunes featuring hits from ZZ Top, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Rolling Stones, Johnny Cash,

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#### Did you know?

- The Holiday Tour of Homes will take place Dec. 9 - 19 on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

- Complete schedule of the 89th Annual Natchitoches Christmas Festival Season available online at [www.NatchitochesChristmas.com](http://www.NatchitochesChristmas.com)

- The Santa Claus House will be open nightly Dec. 6—23 from 6:00 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

- Admission to the LASHOF & NWLA Museum is Free on Dec. 5!

- Live Music and Fireworks every Saturday through Dec. 26!

### 27th Annual Christmas Gala December 2 - 4

#### With Special Performances at the Strand Theatre in Shreveport

Northwestern State University's School of Creative and Performing Arts will stage its most popular holiday production in Natchitoches. The 27th Annual Christmas Gala, a perennial holiday favorite in Natchitoches, will be presented December 2 - 4 in A.A. Fredericks Auditorium. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with an additional 9:00 p.m. show on Friday. Matinee performances are also presented for area schools at 9:30 a.m. and noon December 2 - 3 and 9:30 a.m. December 4.

Tickets to the Christmas Gala are \$10 and can be purchased through the university website. Tickets can be purchased at the box office prior to each performance, but advance ticket purchases are recommended as the shows sell out quickly. Northwestern State, BPCC@NSU and Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts students are admitted free with a current student ID.

Admission for the children's show is \$3. Those planning to bring groups to the children's

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# Christmas Gala (cont.)

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show should make reservations by calling at (318) 357-4483.

In addition, the Christmas Gala will be presented on the stage of Shreveport's historic Strand Theatre with two show times on Saturday, December 12. Show times at The Strand will be a 4:00 p.m. matinee and a 7:30 p.m. evening performance. Tickets are \$5 for students ages 17 and under, free for NSU students with IDs, and \$10 for adults.

For many, the Christmas Gala has been a tradition to kick-off Festival weekend.

"More than 12,000 see the gala in Natchitoches each year, and it is met with enthusiasm from all audiences. The school-age students particularly love the show, and we are hoping to bring together all of the audience favorites for this year's production," said Dr. Greg Handel, director of the School of Creative and Performing Arts.

Each area of the School of

Creative and Performing Arts will be part of the Gala including music, theatre and dance and fine + graphic arts, as well as new media, journalism and communication arts. The Gala will feature the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra, the NSU choir, Northwestern State Department of Theatre and Dance, the NSU Jazz Orchestra, NSU Rockettes, NSU Percussion Ensemble, The Out-on-a-Limb Improv Troupe, and video and visual art provided by Northwestern State Department of Fine + Graphic Arts.



## Billy Cannon Event Set for December 12 at LASHOF

The *Billy Cannon: A Long, Long Run* book signing event originally scheduled for November has been rescheduled for Saturday, December 12 at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum.

From 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 12, Charles DeGravelles and Dr. Billy Cannon will be on hand at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum to sign their new book, *Billy Cannon: A Long, Long Run*. Covering the highs and lows of Dr. Cannon's life, the book is considered a must read for LSU fans. The book will be available for purchase.

The event is free and open to the public.

## Christmas Downriver at Magnolia Plantation December 19

Cane River Creole National Historical Park invites you to experience Christmas Downriver on Saturday, December 19th. Taking place at the Magnolia Plantation Overseer's House, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. events include Christmas crafts, light refreshments and acoustic blues from Jim Pharis.

Besides his own compositions in the country blues vein, Jim Pharis also specializes in finding and arranging acoustic blues gems. These are songs by artists like Bo Carter, Big Bill Broonzy and Oscar "Buddy" Woods. Jim currently lives in the Lafayette area where he plays music, publishes a fingerstyle guitar instructional website and teaches fingerstyle guitar.

Magnolia Plantation is located at 5549 Hwy 119, Derry, LA 71416. All events are free and open to the public. For more information about any of these activities please call (318) 356-8111.



Photo by Richard H. Beck



## Christmas Festival (cont.) Neighborhood Lighting Contest Judging to be Held December 10

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Elvis, Billy Idol and Kiss. Chicken on the Bone will perform on the riverbank stage from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m., the festivities will be capped off by a spectacular fireworks display over beautiful Cane River Lake and the lighting of thousands of lights.

Admission to the festival is \$8 for adults (12 years of age and older) and \$5 for children ages 6 to 11. Children under 5 are admitted free to the festival. Armbands may be purchased the day of the festival from ticket booths located throughout the Downtown Historic District beginning at 6:30 a.m.

Discount armbands may be purchased in advance online at [www.NatchitochesChristmas.com](http://www.NatchitochesChristmas.com) and the following area businesses: Bank of Montgomery, City Bank & Trust Company, Exchange Bank, First Federal Bank of Louisiana, La Capitol Federal Credit Union, MidSouth Bank, Sabine State Bank, Brookshire's Food, Causey's Pharmacy, Neebo's, Econo Lodge, Hampton Inn & Suites, Super 8 Motel, and McDonald's. Pre-sale armbands must be purchased by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 4.

All festival vendors inside the gated area will require tickets to purchase food and/or merchandise. Tickets may be purchased from all ticket booth locations as well as at automated ticket machines on festival day. Sheets of 21 tickets may be purchased for \$20 in advance at any pre-sale armband location as well as Kaffie Fredericks, Georgia's Gift Shop, and Dickens & Co. on Front Street.

For more information on the 89th Annual Christmas Festival, please visit [www.NatchitochesChristmas.com](http://www.NatchitochesChristmas.com).

## American Indian Arts & Crafts Day December 5

The Williamson Museum at Northwestern State University will host the annual American Indian Arts and Crafts Day Saturday, December 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Room 210 of Keyser Hall on the NSU campus. Admission is free and the public is invited to attend.

Tribal artists and craftspeople from American Indian communities throughout Louisiana will attend and will have baskets, beadwork, wood carvings, pottery and other traditional arts available for sale. There will be craft demonstrations and performances of traditional songs by the Tunica-Biloxi Legend Keepers and other groups. All proceeds will go to the craftspeople.

Northwestern State has hosted American Indian Arts and Crafts Day for more than 40 years on the same day as the Natchitoches Christmas Festival. For more information contact Dr. Pete Gregory at [gregoryh@nsula.edu](mailto:gregoryh@nsula.edu) or at (318) 357-6685.



The Natchitoches Christmas Festival Committee invites residents to get into the holiday spirit and shine brightly in the 2nd Annual Neighborhood Lighting Contest. Judging will be completed by Miss Merry Christmas and the Christmas Belles on the evening of December 10, 2015.

From November 21 through January 6, downtown Natchitoches is illuminated with hundreds of thousands of twinkling lights. "The Neighborhood Lighting Contest is a great way to get everyone involved in the Christmas festivities," stated Marian Keator, Neighborhood Lighting Committee chair. "Since Natchitoches is the City of Lights, we hope that everyone will show their Christmas spirit and help light the way for the season!"

Homes will be judged on holiday lights and yard displays. Homes must be within city limits of Natchitoches. There is no entry fee for the contest. Anyone interested in participating should email Samantha Bonnette at [sbonnette@natchitochesla.gov](mailto:sbonnette@natchitochesla.gov) with their name, address and phone number.

All entries will be judged on the evening of December 10, 2015. A total of 12 winners will be announced. Winners will receive a lighted spirit stick, yard sign and bragging rights.

For more information, please contact Samantha Bonnette at (318) 352-2746 or via email at [sbonnette@natchitochesla.gov](mailto:sbonnette@natchitochesla.gov).

## Colonial Christmas at Fort St. Jean Baptiste SHS Dec. 5 & 6

Fort St. Jean Baptiste staff and volunteers will be celebrating a Colonial Christmas on the Cane River. Visitors are welcome to experience cannon firing, musket firing, camp life and other festivities associated with a French Colonial Christmas. Schools please call ahead to schedule a field trip on these days. Come early on Saturday, to visit the site, enjoy the Christmas parade in front of the visitor's center, and walk downtown to enjoy the festivities and fireworks. All activities are weather permitting. Hours of operation are Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

# Employees Recognized for Years of Service

*City of Natchitoches*

**Oldest Permanent  
Settlement in the  
Louisiana Purchase**

**P.O. Box 37  
700 Second Street  
Natchitoches, La. 71458**

**Phone: 318-352-2772**

**Fax: 318-357-3829**

**E-mail:**

**cityhall@natchitochesla.gov**



The City of Natchitoches recognized employees for their years of service at an Employee Appreciation Luncheon held Wednesday, November 25. Mayor Posey thanked each employee for their hard work and dedication to the City of Natchitoches.

Retirees honored at the luncheon included Carol Ryan (City Court, 14 years), Talmadge Brown (Utility Department – Electrical, 20 years), Douglas Reliford (Community Development, 22 years), Alton Rachal (City Marshal, 24 years), and Richard Robertson (Police Department, 25 years).

Employees recognized for 10 years of service included Carlos Charles (Public Works), William Connell (Police Department), Tyrone LaCour (Public Works), Chris Post (Natchitoches Events Center), Michael Sesvold (Fire Department), Shawna Straub (Finance), and Keith Thompson (Police Department).

Employees recognized for 15 years of service were Amord Babers (Utility Department – Electrical), Terrell Elter (Utility Department – Electrical), Juanita Fowler (Planning & Zoning), John Harris (Community Development), Patrick Jones (Finance), Andy Jordan (Utility Department – Electrical), Don Mims (City Councilman), Scott Nichols (Fire Department), Tommy Solomon (Utility Department – Electrical), and Troy Whittington (Fire Department).

Those celebrating 20 years of service included Debbie Holden (Utility Service Center), Lee McKinney (Utility Department – Electrical), and Allen Solomon (Fire Department).

Leslie Bayonne (Utility Department – Electrical), Robert Harris (Fire Department), Charles LaCaze (Utility Department – Sewer), and Harmon Winter (Police Department) were recognized for 25 years of service.

Five employees were recognized and honored for 30 years of service. They were Brian Bonnette (Utility Department – Electrical), Ronald Corkern (City Attorney), Fred Gahagan (City Court, Judge), Chief Crit Miller (Fire Department), and Rhonda Roge (City Court).

In addition, a moment of silence was held for those employees and retirees of the City of Natchitoches who have passed away in the past year. Those remembered included Henry “Red” Hymes (Utility Department), Raymond Litton (Utility Department) and Oscar Vails (Fire Department).

## Upcoming Holidays & Important Dates

Dec. 1: Planning & Zoning Meeting,  
5:30 p.m. at the Arts Center

Dec. 2 - 4: NSU Christmas Gala,  
7:00 p.m. at the A.A. Fredericks  
Auditorium. There will also be a 9:00  
p.m. show on Friday, Dec. 4.

Dec. 5 – 89th Annual Natchitoches  
Christmas Festival

7:45 a.m. City of Lights 5K

11:00 a.m. Brody Caster performs

1:00 p.m. Festival of Lights

Parade

3:00 p.m. Chicken on the Bone  
performs

6:00 p.m. Fireworks

Dec. 6: Santa Claus House opens to  
the public. Open nightly 6:00 p.m. to  
8:30 p.m. through Dec. 23

Dec. 7: Historic District Commission  
Meeting, 5:00 p.m. at the Arts Center

Dec. 9 - 19: Holiday Tour of Homes.  
Tours conducted on Wednesdays and  
Fridays (5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.) and  
Saturdays (1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

Dec. 11 & 12, 18 & 19: Changed by  
a Baby Boy Play, Arts Center. Show  
times are 6:00 p.m. on Friday, 1:00  
p.m. & 4:00 p.m. on Saturday

Dec. 11 & 12, 18 & 19 – Holiday  
Kids Fest, Downtown Riverbank.  
Admission charged Saturdays after  
2:00 p.m. Fireworks Saturdays at 7:00  
p.m.

Dec. 14: City Council Meeting, 5:30  
p.m. at the Arts Center

Dec. 21: Airport Commission Meet-  
ing, 5:00 p.m. at Natchitoches Re-  
gional Airport

Dec. 24—Christmas Eve, City Offices  
closed

Dec. 25—Christmas Day, City Offices  
closed

Dec. 26: Holiday Kids Fest, Down-  
town Riverbank. Admission free.  
Fireworks over Cane River Lake,  
7:00 p.m.

Dec. 31: New Year's Eve,  
City Offices Closed. Fire-  
works over Cane River Lake,  
7:00 p.m.

Jan. 1: New Year's Day,  
City Offices  
Closed

